

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 3 and 4 as shown below, in which deleted terms are shown with strikethrough and added terms are shown with underscoring. Also, please add new claims 5-15 as shown below.

1. (currently amended) A particle measuring apparatus comprising:

a flow cell in which a particle monitoring area is formed in a first passage by irradiating the flow cell with light; and

a condenser ~~means for condensing~~ which condenses light scattered by particles contained in sample fluid passing through the particle monitoring area so as to obtain information including ~~a particle~~ diameter of the particles,

wherein ~~[[the]]~~ a central axis of the first passage substantially corresponds to ~~[[the]]~~ an optical axis of the condenser ~~[[means]]~~, and inner walls of the flow cell are arranged so as not to ~~hinder~~ impede the scattered light from entering ~~[[the]]~~ an outmost ~~periphery~~ peripheral portion of the condenser ~~[[means]]~~.

2. (previously presented) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the flow cell further comprises a second passage which is substantially perpendicular to the first passage.

3. (currently amended) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the flow cell further comprises a second passage having a pyramidal shape or a conical shape, ~~[[the]]~~

and a central axis of ~~[[which]]~~ the second passage substantially corresponds to that of the first passage.

4. (currently amended)        The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the flow cell further comprises:

second passages having a pyramidal shape or a conical shape provided on the upstream side and the downstream side of the flow cell, respectively ~~[[the]]~~ ; and

another condenser; wherein

central ~~[[axis]]~~ axes of ~~[[which]]~~ the second passages substantially correspond~~[[s]]~~ to that of the first passage, and ~~[[two]]~~ said condensers ~~[[means]]~~ are provided on opposite ~~with~~ ~~respect to~~ sides of the flow cell.

5. (new)        The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the second passage extends continuously from the first passage, the inner walls of the flow cell define an opening communicating said first and second passages, and said opening being sufficiently large so as not to impede the scattered light from entering the outmost peripheral portion of the condenser.

6. (new)        The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the second passage extends continuously from the first passage.

7. (new)        The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the second

passages extend continuously from the first passage.

8. (new) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the condenser is a condensing lens.

9. (new) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the condensers are condensing lenses.

10. (new) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first passage has a substantially rectangular cross sectional shape.

11. (new) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the second passage has a substantially rectangular cross sectional shape.

12. (new) A particle measuring apparatus comprising:

a flow cell in which a particle monitoring area is formed in a first passage by irradiating the flow cell with light; and

a condenser which condenses light scattered by particles contained in sample fluid passing through the particle monitoring area so as to obtain information including diameter of the particles; wherein

a central axis of the first passage substantially corresponds to an optical axis of the condenser; and

inner walls of the flow cell are shaped so as not to impede the scattered light from entering an outmost peripheral portion of the condenser at a position where the condenser is arranged relative to the flow cell.

13. (new) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the flow cell further comprises a second passage which is substantially perpendicular to the first passage and extends continuously therefrom.

14. (new) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the flow cell further comprises a second passage having a pyramidal shape or a conical shape and extending continuously from the first passage, and a central axis of the second passage substantially corresponds to that of the first passage.

15. (new) The particle measuring apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the flow cell further comprises:

second passages having a pyramidal shape or a conical shape provided on the upstream side and the downstream side of the flow cell, respectively, and which extend continuously from the first passage; and

another condenser; wherein

central axes of the second passages substantially correspond to that of the first passage, and said condensers are provided on opposite sides of the flow cell.